

Judy Hammond



County of Los Angeles CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

October 3, 2005

To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen,
Chief Administrative Officer

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

YVONNE B. BURKE
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

TRIAL COURT FACILITIES ACT OF 2002: QUARTERLY UPDATE

On November 12, 2002, your Board instructed my office to report on the implementation of SB 1732 (Escutia, Statutes of 2002) and to provide quarterly updates thereafter. SB 1732 is the legislation which requires the transfer of county courthouses to the State. This is the eleventh quarterly report on the subject and covers July through September 2005 activities.

Legislative Activities

On August 29, 2005, I met with State Senator Joseph Dunn, and representatives from other counties and courts who were chosen by the Senator, to try to resolve a number of county-court issues, including seismic safety and other issues relative to the transfer.

By way of background and as was reported in our last quarterly report, the County team reiterated at an April 7, 2005 meeting with the State Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) that the State's seismic rating system appears to preclude most Los Angeles County courthouse facilities from being transferred unless they are structurally retrofitted. The County team noted that unless the seismic requirements change, the County will be constrained financially from transferring all but a handful of courthouses. This issue may be resolved through passage by the electorate of a bond issuance to be authorized by SB 395 (Escutia), to fund the acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation of courts, or through AB 262 (Berg), which would allow the County to transfer courthouses to the State if they are considered safe for occupancy by the local building official; however, these two bills are now two-year bills.

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As a result of the meeting with Senator Dunn, legislation was drafted jointly by counties and the AOC to allow transfer of seismically "deficient" buildings to the State, if the transferring county would maintain liability for the buildings in the event of an earthquake; however, the effort did not get traction in the Legislature. My office will continue to work with the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and other entities on finding possible solutions to this and other similar issues.

Other Recent Activities

My office continues to work with the AOC on completing the first Los Angeles County court transfer, San Fernando Courthouse, by submitting additional documentation, responding to State inquiries, working with the Superior Court on parking allocations, completing the County Facilities Payment (CFP) form, and drafting an agreement term sheet, which is under review by County Counsel and will be presented to the State for negotiation.

On August 5, 2005, my office hosted the quarterly Southern California Counties meeting on the court facilities transfer. One of the counties reported that for a seismically deficient courthouse, the AOC offered to accept a cash payment in lieu of an upgrade to the buildings.

On August 25, 2005, my office received a letter from the AOC regarding the disposition of the South Gate Courthouse, which was vacated by the Court in mid-2004 and which the Court does not intend to reoccupy. Citing the building as deficient, the AOC informed us that the County may dispose of this property as it deems appropriate. My office is currently working with the City of South Gate, which has expressed an interest in acquiring the vacated courthouse.

County staff continue to participate in the monthly conference calls with CSAC. We will report back with the next quarterly report in January 2006.

DEJ:JSE
MV:AT:rr

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
 Auditor-Controller
 County Counsel
 Internal Services Department
 Department of Public Works